

2020 RES-245

MEMORIAL TO PAUL R. RUSK

WHEREAS, Paul R. Rusk, of the City of Madison, passed away on Sunday, October 11, 2020 at the age of 65; and

WHEREAS, Paul served as a member of the County Board from 2002 until 2020, representing District 12 encompassing the Village of Maple Bluff and the Northside of Madison. He was a proud Northsider, and was passionate about serving his district and working collaboratively with area leaders to make sure their voices were heard. He was always available for a community meeting, a phone call, or a cup of coffee to discuss issues, brainstorm ideas, or just listen and offer support; and

WHEREAS, Paul served as the chair of the Dane County Board's Public Protection and Judiciary Committee for twelve and a half years, stepping down from that role in the Fall of 2018. Currently he served as a member of the Public Works and Transportation Committee; and

WHEREAS, In the dozen-plus years that Paul led the Public Protection and Judiciary Committee, from 2006 to 2018, the county addressed many challenging issues throughout the criminal justice system. Paul worked to find a way to close the outdated jail facility in the City County Building, provide desperately needed programming and medical beds, and decrease the number of jail beds. His focus was how to best protect public safety while providing a fair and just system; and

WHEREAS, Paul also lent his voice and service to several additional committees, councils, commissions, and boards; he was a member of the Environmental Council from 2002 to 2005, a member of Executive Committee from 2004 to 2006, a member of the City-County Liaison Committee from 2008 to 2014, a member of the Tree Board from 2004 to 2016, and a member of the Airport Commission from 2002 to 2020. Paul recently was appointed to the Lakes and Watershed Commission as he desired to learn more about and contribute to the lake and watershed system in Dane County; and

WHEREAS, Paul's contributions to the Dane County Regional Airport and the Northside community at large cannot be overstated. As a member of the Airport Commission and the Chair of the Commission's Noise Abatement Subcommittee, Paul struck a genuine balance between cultivating growth at the airport, yet remaining a fierce defender of the Northside's best interests. Paul was a great leader, neighbor, and friend, and he will be sorely missed; and

WHEREAS, Paul grew up in Daly City, California and spent his adult life in Madison. He worked for U.S. Representative Robert Kastenmeier, Wisconsin State Senator Calvin Potter, and as the director of the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, Paul graduated from UW-Madison in 1977 with a degree in horticulture, and earned a master's degree in public policy from the UW in 1991. As a student body leader and senior class president, he spoke at the 1977 spring commencement, saying, "We must always remember that we—the people of this nation—should and can be 'the powers that be'." Decades later, Paul commented, "I wanted to leave a message that we, as new, young graduates, had our whole lives in front of us, and we really could substantially make changes in the world.

WHEREAS, Paul enjoyed gathering at neighbors' homes: whether it was for friendly conversation, signing nomination papers for the County Board, or just taking a break in the driveway from hours of yardwork. Paul loved exercise and being outdoors, especially enjoying the many natural wonders of Warner Park; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors hereby pays its respects to our departed colleague and extends its sympathies to his family and to his many friends. We join them in mourning the loss of our former colleague who gave so unselfishly to our community.

Analiese Eicher, Chair

Dane County Board of Supervisor

Signed and sealed before me this

_____ day of _____, 2020.

Scott McDonell,

Dane County Clerk